The Absent-minded Mallard

MORGAN

Lost on the River

Children's Leisure Products Ltd.

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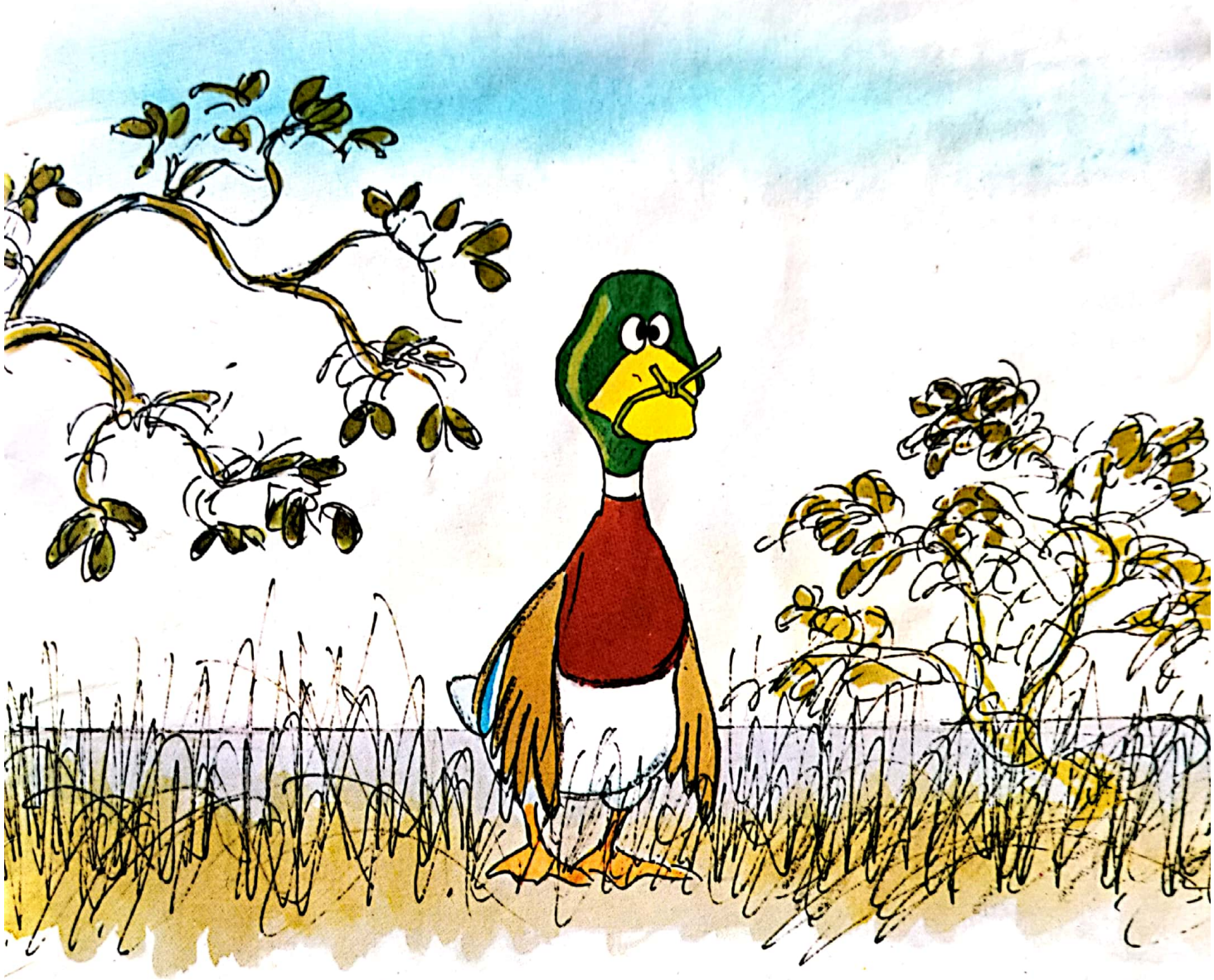
by Bill & Audrey Titcombe



From the day he was born Morgan was different from his brothers and sisters. They thought that he was greedy.

He wasn't!

Morgan you see was absent minded.

So when feeding time came around, Morgan would go twice and sometimes three times to mother to be fed. Poor Morgan had completely forgotton that he had had his food!

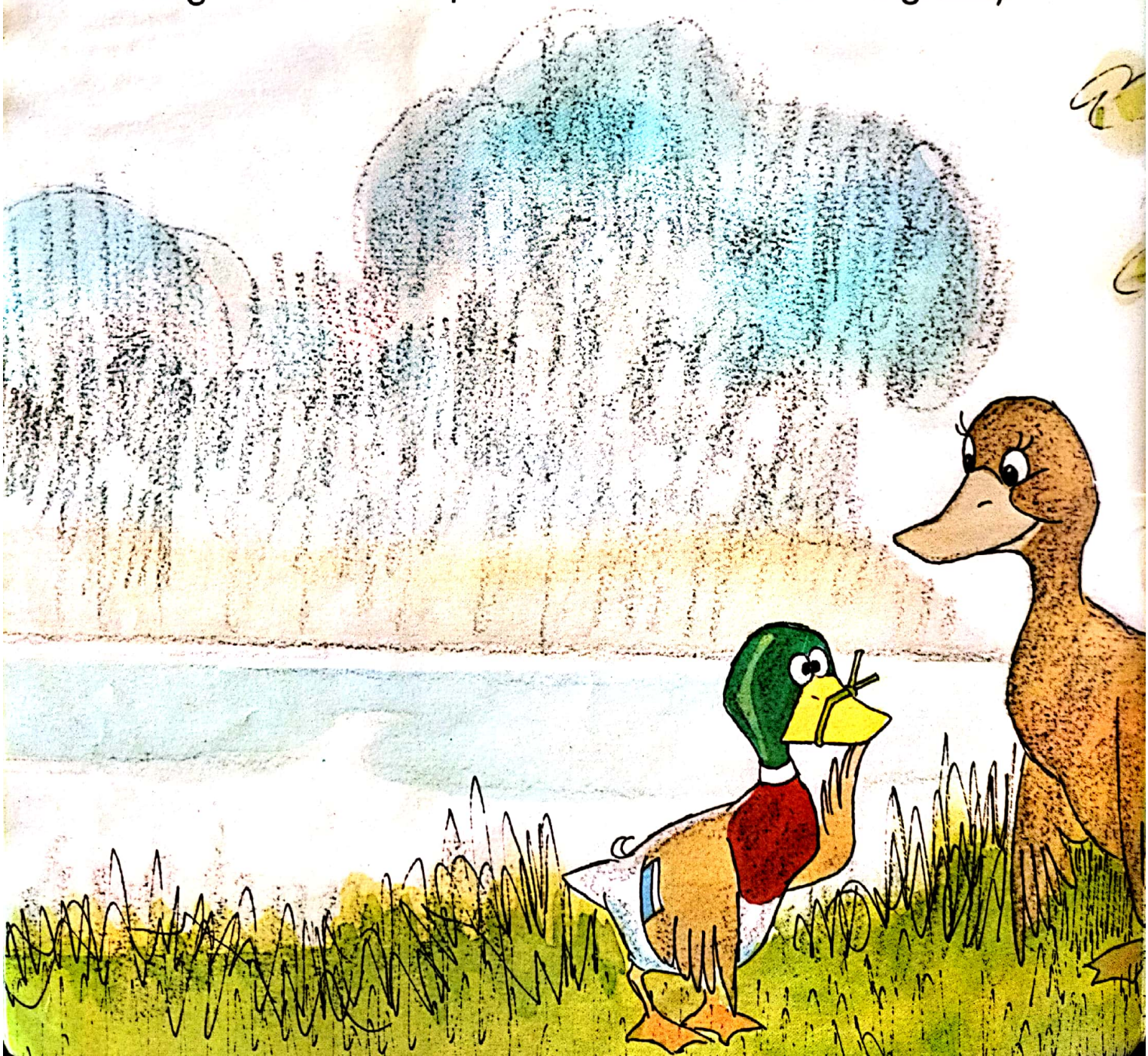
As he grew Morgan never remembered anything his mother or father taught him. For instance, during his first swim, he started so well, then right in the middle of the river he forgot what to do and nearly drowned!

One day mother decided to have a talk with Morgan. "Morgan, dear," she said, "you really must try to remember things, otherwise I'm sure I do not know what will become of you. I think a good idea for you would be to tie a reed around your beak."

Morgan did as mother had suggested, but it didn't work. He never could remember why he had tied the knot in the first place.

As time went by, his brothers and sisters grew quite large. Poor Morgan hardly grew at all.

Morgan had other problems. He was short-sighted,



and his eyes were crossed. Mother took him to the opticians, and bought him a splendid pair of glasses, but most of the time he couldn't remember where he had put them!

Soon the time came for the young mallards to take their first flight, and they all did very well, but not Morgan of course. He took off well enough, but in mid-flight, forgot to flap his wings, and crashed to the ground!

On his second flight, Morgan decided to close his eyes so that he could concentrate more, but then he couldn't see where he was going and flew straight into a tree, nearly breaking his neck and his glasses!

One lovely summer morning, his brothers decided to have a day out, and they set off to visit another part of the river. Morgan was not invited, and after lunch Morgan just happened to overhear his parents talking.

"What are we going to do about Morgan?" said mother. "He is so different from the other children."

"I know," said father, "but don't worry, my dear, he has a lovely nature and everyone loves him."

When he heard this, Morgan decided right there and then to change his ways. "I know," he said, "I will go and join my brothers and sisters," and off he flew.

Now it just so happened that at the same time as Morgan had taken flight, on another part of the river Swan was taking his afternoon nap. Morgan by now was getting tired, and so he decided to land.

He didn't see Swan and dropped right onto Swan's head. Swan was not amused!

"I'm so sorry," said Morgan, "please forgive me, but I'm rather short-sighted!" Swan, who was really a nice chap, forgave Morgan instantly.

Morgan adjusted his glasses, and asked Swan if he had seen any mallards about.

"I'm afraid not," said Swan, "not a sign of one, but you are most welcome to stay here until you get yourself sorted out."

"How very kind of you," said Morgan, and that's just what he did.

After several hours Morgan began to think of his family again, and wanted to return home. He went over to Swan. "I think I will try to make my way back," he said. "Well," said Swan, "if you really must go, perhaps I can help you a bit with directions."

Swan advised Morgan to take the first bend in the river, and then take off in an easterly direction. Morgan adjusted his glasses, thanked Swan for all his kindness, and away he went.

Morgan soon lost himself, so he decided to land to take stock of the situation! His landing was not very good, in fact it was rather bad, and he crashed into the river bank, bruising his beak, making a great noise and disturbing the other ducks and swans whose home it was!

"Hello," said a voice, "you're new here, aren't you?"

Morgan turned – and even with his poor eyesight could see a very beautiful otter.

"Hello," said Morgan. "Yes I am new here," and Morgan explained what had happened. "Don't worry," said Eleanor – that was the otter's name. "I will get you home. I know this part of the river like the back of my hand, just follow me, and keep close."

Morgan had to swim very hard to keep up with Eleanor who just seemed to glide through the water. Then the lovely otter stopped. "Here we are," she said, turning to Morgan who looked very tired. "Your family live just round the next bend."

Morgan peered at Eleanor in his short-sighted way, and thanked her. "Think nothing of it," smiled Eleanor. "I will watch until you turn the bend, then I will be sure that you are home safely."

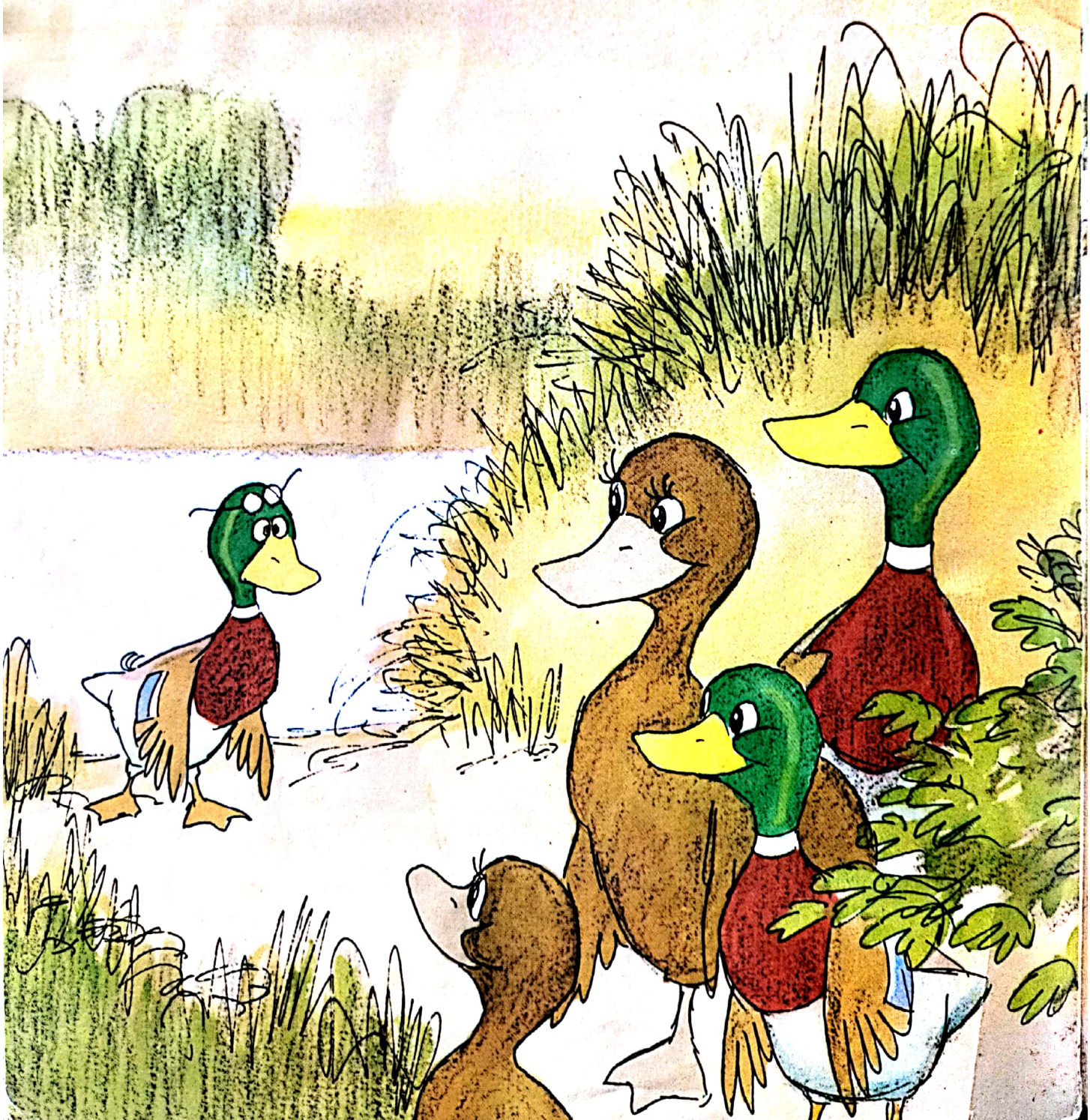
Morgan swam round the bend, and there were all the family.

Everyone was pleased to see him.

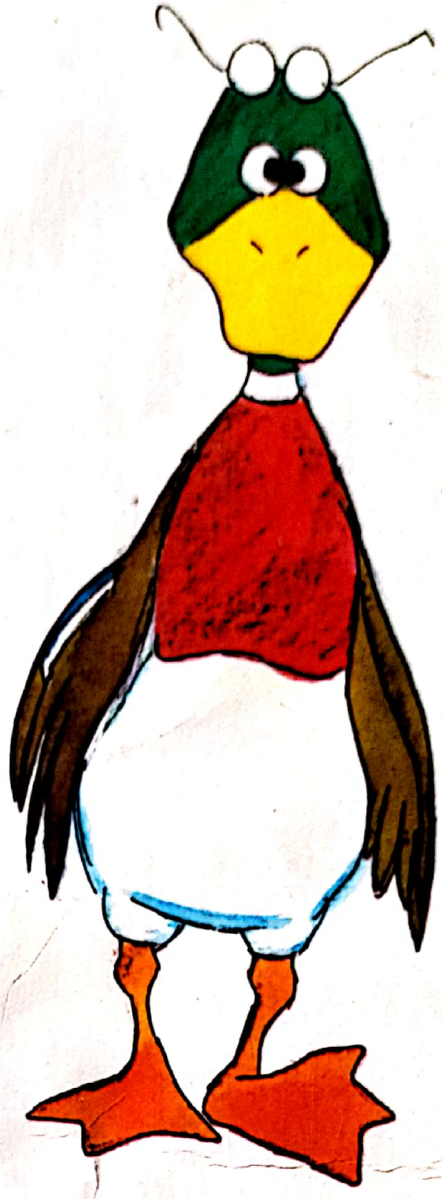
Mother made tea, and soon they were all chatting away.

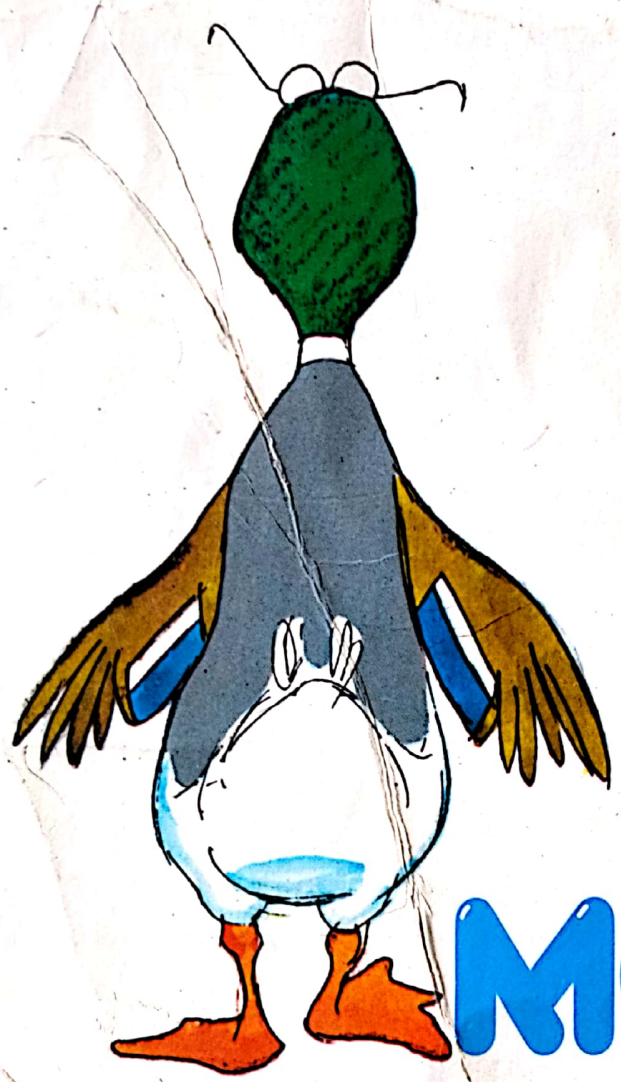
"Now tell me," said mother, "where have you been?"

But of course – Morgan could not remember!



Lost on the River
Birthday Party
Flying Lessons
New Friends





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